GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PERSONNEL,PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3770
ANSWERED ON:13.12.2000
RESPONSIBILITY IN ADMINISTRATION
BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH

Will the Minister of PERSONNEL,PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to introduce concept of modern management alongwith right sizing of Human Resource in the Government;

(b) whether the accountability mechanism presently in vogue in the Department/Ministries is inadequate; and

(c) if so, the remedial measures taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS & PUBLIC GRIEVANCES IN THE MINIS
PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES & PENSIONS (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE)

(a),(b)&(c): Administrative efficiency and effectiveness are matters which receive the attention of the Government on a continuous basis. Some of the measures taken in this regard are outlined in the succeeding paragraphs.

A High Powered Committee (HPC) under the Chairmanship of Cabinet Secretary was constituted in October, 1997, with the specific objective of improving administrative efficiency by using information technology in Government. In addition an Executive Committee of the above mentioned High Powered Committee under the chairmanship of the Additional Secretary, Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances has been constituted to follow up on the decisions of the HPC. Under the direction/guidance of these Committees, inter alia, action has been taken to designate a Joint Secretary level officer as IT Manager in every Ministry/Department. A minimum agenda for e-governance has been drawn up and is under implementation. 2-3% of the Plan Budget of every Ministry/Department has been earmarked for promotion of IT, including purchase of hardware/software.

The Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure) has been issuing instructions from time to time to control creationof Plan and Non-Plan posts and thereby to reduce the expenditure on establishment. In August, 1999, instructions were issued by that Ministry to all the Ministries/Departments, inter alia, to undertake a review of all the posts which were lying vacant in the Ministries/Departments and in their Attached and Subordinate offices, etc. in consultation with the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure). These instructions envisage that till the review is completed, no vacant posts will be filled up except with the approval of the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure). Further, such Ministries/Departments as had not fully implemented the Government`s decision to achieve 10% reduction in the number of posts (as on 1-1-1992) were asked to implement that decision immediately. According to the information available with the Ministry of Finance, approximately 1.83 lakh posts have been abolished in various Ministries/Departments as a result of this exercise.

In the recent past, three departments, namely, Department of Industrial Development, Department of Sugar and Edible Oils, and the Department of Supply have been abolished.

The Government has taken measures to bring more transparency and accountability in its functioning.A large number of Ministries/Departments/Organisations with considerable public interface have already introduced Citizen`s Charters indicating broadly the quality of service the public would be entitled to, within a specified time-frame. Information and Facilitation or Help Counters have been set up by 65 Ministries/Departments/Central Government Organisations to provide information on procedures, programmes and schemes of the concerned organizations as well as to access information pertaining to the status of individual cases.

The Government has tried to incorporate measures of accountability in administration through various means, such as Annual Action Plans of Ministries/Departments of Government, Annual Confidential Reports of Government officials, fixation of levels for decision making, audit of the Government accounts by the Comptroller and Auditor General and the examination of the functioning of administrative Ministries/Departments by the Parliamentary Committees.

The Government has also taken up simplification of laws, rules etc. for improving efficiency of organizations. On the initiative of the Government, over 40 Departments undertook, through expert Task Forces or by internal exercises, a detailed review of all laws, regulations and procedures administered by them.

The Government had also set up a Commission on Review of Administrative Laws in May, 1998 to make recommendations for repeal/amendments of laws, regulations etc. with a view to improve service delivery and transparency in the functioning of the

Government. The important recommendations of the Commission include repeal of almost 50% of Central Laws (1382 out of about 2500), documentation of administrative laws by all the Ministries/Departments, development of a viable alternative disputes resolution machinery etc. Most of the Ministries/Departments have initiated action to bring about suitable amendments/modifications in the Acts and Laws being administered by them. All the unrepealed Central Acts of All India application have been placed on the NICNET and INTERNET. An Action Plan has been prepared by the Legislative Department and sent to the concerned Ministries/Departments for making all the subordinate legislations available on the NICNET within two years.

In addition to the measures mentioned above, the Government has taken certain other steps to improve accountability in administration. These steps include software package to track the movement of files, documentation of best practices in Central and State Government Organisations etc.